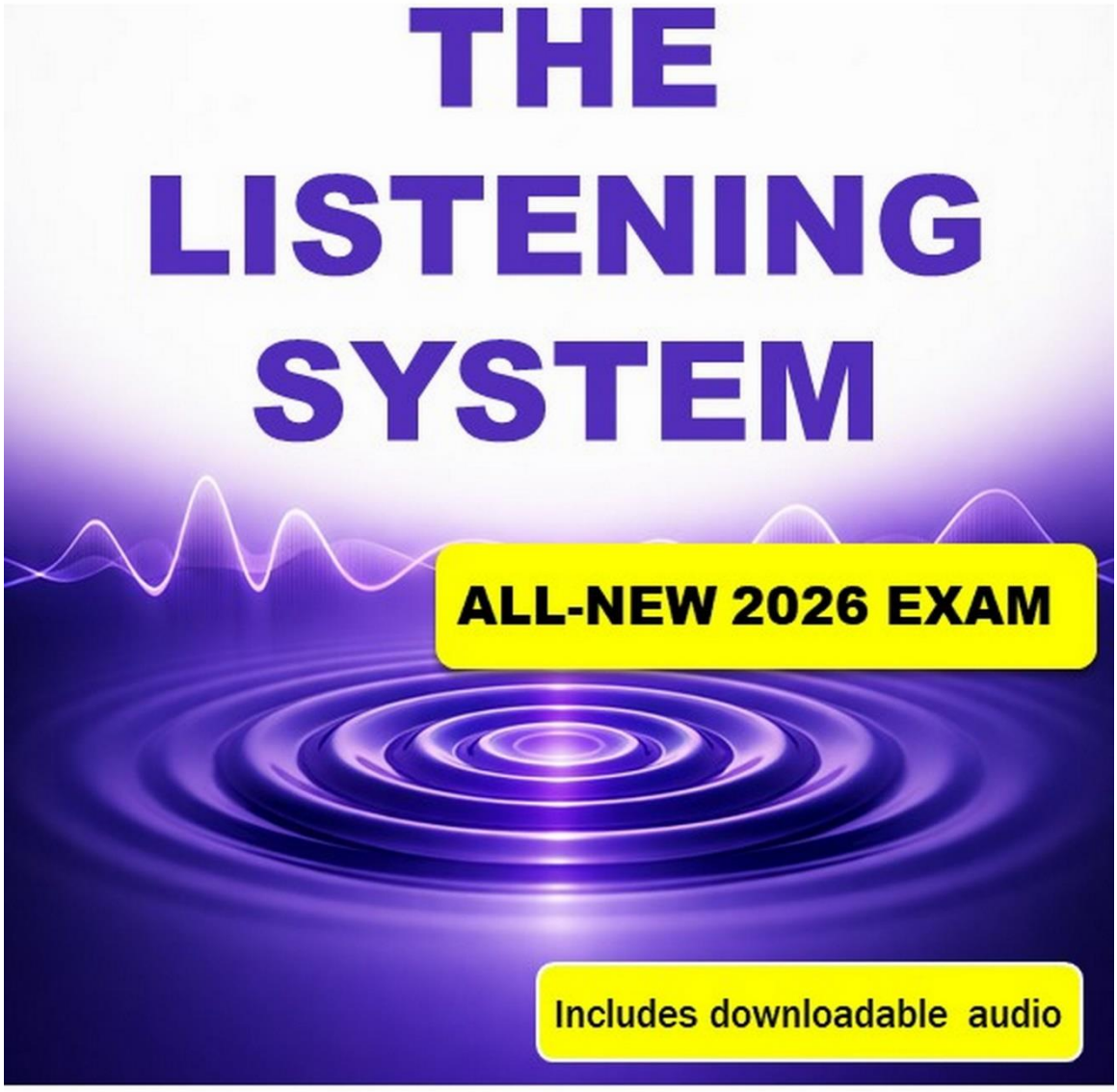
Ultimate Guide to the TOEFL® iBT (2026 Edition)



Dr. Hikmet Şahiner

SYSTEM BOOKS

TOEFL® is a registered trademark of Educational Testing Service (ETS). This product is not endorsed or approved by ETS.

WHY YOU UNDERSTAND READ TEXTS BUT FAIL TO HEAR THEM?

Deconstructing Spoken English for the Redesigned 2026 TOEFL® iBT

You can read academic texts with ease, you know thousands of complex English words, and your grammar is solid. Yet, when you listen to a natural English conversation, it all sounds like a fast, blurry wall of sound. You miss crucial endings (*-s, -ed*), confuse similar vowel pairs (*ship/sheep*, *full/fool*), and struggle to identify the speaker's true attitude.

This is not because of a lack of study. It is because your ears are trained for "written English," not "spoken English."

Starting **January 21, 2026**, the redesigned TOEFL® iBT Listening section is faster, shorter, and highly adaptive. It relies heavily on your ability to process real-time **Connected Speech**—where words fuse together, sounds weaken, and consonants vanish completely.

Tasks like **"Listen and Choose a Response"** demand instant pragmatic comprehension. You no longer have the luxury of re-listening or slowly translating in your head. You must catch the meaning *the first time*, at native speed.

Welcome to "The Listening System"

This is not just another collection of practice tests with standard answer keys. Designed by Dr. Hikmet Sahiner, drawing from 25+ years of high-stakes prep, a Johns Hopkins Ph.D., and Cambridge CELTA credentials, this book is a **linguistic gym for your ears**.

In this free preview, you will dive directly into the mechanics of native communication:

1. **Connected Speech Laboratory (Chapter 4):** Learn how words like *"next week"* organically become *"nex week"* and how to predict these acoustic shortcuts.
2. **Rapid-Fire Response Drills (Chapter 14):** Test your reflexes against the brand-new 2026 short-conversation format.

Stop studying English from the page. Train your ears to decode the real music of the language.

Turn the page, play the audio, and unlock your true listening potential.

Chapter 4: Connected Speech: Linking and Elision

Many TOEFL Listening errors happen because learners expect English to sound like printed words with clear spaces between them. Real spoken English is different. Speakers connect words, reduce common phrases, and sometimes drop sounds completely—especially in fast campus conversations.

This chapter trains you to recognize connected speech, focusing on three high-impact features:

1. Linking (especially consonant + vowel linking)

2. Common reductions (gonna, wanna, gotta, kinda, sorta)

3. Elision (dropping sounds in consonant clusters)

By the end, you should be able to "rebuild" the standard form in your head quickly—so you can answer TOEFL questions accurately even when speech is fast.

4.1 Why Spoken English Doesn't Sound Like the Textbook

The "textbook illusion"

In a textbook, English looks like this:

Did you eat it?

I want to ask you a question.

We are going to meet at eight.

Many learners expect to hear every word clearly and separately. But in natural speech, words connect:

"Did you eat it?" → sounds like "Didja eat it?"

"I want to ask you…" → sounds like "I wanna ask ya…"

"We are going to…" → sounds like "We're gonna…"

This is not "lazy English." It is normal spoken rhythm.

Three reasons connected speech happens

1. **Speed + rhythm:** English is stress-timed: stressed syllables stand out, and unstressed parts often become shorter and weaker.
2. **Ease of pronunciation:** Speakers naturally choose easier mouth movements. Linking and reductions reduce effort.
3. **Predictability:** Common phrases become reduced because listeners can still understand them from context.

The big TOEFL problem: you hear one long sound stream

In TOEFL listening, you might hear something like:

"Can I getit tomorrow?"

"We're gonna meetup after class."

"I'd've told you if I'd known."

If you only trained with slow, clear speech, your brain may not recognize these as:

“Can I get it tomorrow?”

“We are going to meet up after class.”

“I would have told you if I had known.”

So the key skill is this: recognize reduced speech quickly and map it back to the standard form.

Before/after examples (what changes)

Below are common patterns you will practice in this chapter.

- **Linking (no pause)**
  - pick it up → “pic-kit-up”
  - turn it off → “tur-nit-off”
  - take a look → “tay-ka-look”

- **Reduction (shorter forms)**
  - going to → “gonna”
  - want to → “wanna”
  - got to → “gotta”
  - kind of → “kinda”
  - sort of → “sorta”

- **Elision (sound disappears)**
  - next day → “nex day” (often the /t/ is dropped)
  - most people → “mos people” (often the /t/ is dropped)
  - friendship → “frenship” (sometimes /d/ is softened or dropped in fast speech)

Elision is especially important for TOEFL because it can hide grammar endings and word boundaries.

A helpful mindset: “Listen for meaning peaks”

In fast speech, not all parts are equal. The most reliable parts are: stressed words (nouns, main verbs, negative words, numbers) key transitions (but, so, because, therefore) content words (problem, reason, solution)

Connected speech mostly affects short function words (to, of, a, you) and boundaries between words. So instead of trying to “hear every letter,” aim to catch the meaning peaks and rebuild the rest.

4.2 Linking Consonant + Vowel (Audio Required)

Linking happens when the final sound of one word connects smoothly to the next word. The most important pattern for TOEFL listening is:

Consonant + Vowel linking (a final consonant moves toward the next vowel sound)

This can make two words sound like one longer word.

How it works (simple view)

- **pick + it → "pickit"**
- **turn + off → "turnoff"**
- **need + it → "needit"**
- **take + a → "takea"**
- **miss + it → "missit"**

The meaning does not change. But if you are not ready, you may fail to identify the words.

Common TOEFL-style linking environments

1. **Verb + it / them / us**
    - turn it off
    - pick it up
    - email it to me
    - bring them in

2. **Preposition + article**
    - in a minute
    - at a desk
    - on a website

3. **Question forms**
    - Can I ask a question?
    - Did you read it?
    - Should we order it?

4. **Campus speech**
    - sign up for it
    - hand in a form
    - check it online

Audio Track Ch4-Track1 (Listen to the sample)
Man: pick it up … pick it up
Man: turn it off … turn it off
Man: read it again … read it again
Man: need it today … need it today
Man: take a look … take a look
Man: in an hour … in an hour
Man: at a desk … at a desk
Man: on a app … on an app
Man: Can I ask a question? … Can I ask a question?
Man: Did you send it? … Did you send it?
Man: We should pick it up after class.
Man: Please turn it off before you leave.
Man: I'll need it in an hour.
Man: Take a look at the schedule.
Man: Did you read it again or just once?

Task A: Identify boundaries (Where are the word breaks?)

Directions

- Listen to Track Ch4-Track1.
- For each line below, draw a vertical bar **|** where you think the word boundary is.
- Then write the standard form.

Example: You hear: "pickitup" → write: pick | it | up

1. "turnitoff" → _____
2. "readitagain" → _____
3. "needitoday" → _____
4. "takealook" → _____
5. "inanhour" → _____
6. "atadesk" → _____
7. "didyousendit" → _____

Task B: Matching (Linked form → standard form)

Directions

- Listen to Track Ch4-Track1 again.
- Match the linked phrase (1–8) to the standard form (A–H).

#	Linked phrase	Letter	Standard form
1	pickitup		A) take a look
2	turnitoff		B) read it again
3	readitagain		C) in an hour
4	needitoday		D) did you send it
5	takealook		E) pick it up
6	inanhour		F) need it today
7	atadesk		G) at a desk
8	didyousendit		H) turn it off

Task C: Meaning confirmation (Linking should not change meaning)

Choose the best meaning. Linking makes it harder to hear the words, but the meaning stays the same.

1. “Takealook at the schedule.” means:
(A) Remove the schedule
(B) Check the schedule

2. “I’ll needitinanhour.” means:
(A) I need it now
(B) I will need it one hour later

Practical listening tip: “Expect linking after final consonants”

When a word ends with a consonant and the next word begins with a vowel sound, assume linking: pick + it need + it read + it send + it turn + off

This expectation reduces surprise, and your brain segments the speech faster.

4.3 Common Reductions (Audio Required)

Reductions are extremely common in campus conversations, casual speech, and fast announcements. On TOEFL, you do not need to produce these forms perfectly, but you should recognize them quickly.

The five reduction families in this chapter

Standard form	Common reduced form	Example meaning
going to	gonna	future plan
want to	wanna	desire/plan
got to / have got to	gotta	necessity
kind of	kinda	approximate category
sort of	sorta	approximate / not exact

Important: Reduced forms often appear in informal speech. In more formal academic lectures, you may hear fewer reductions, but linking and elision still occur.

Audio Track Ch4-Track2 (Listen to the sample)
Woman: I'm gonna email the professor tonight.
Woman: Do you wanna sit near the window?
Woman: I gotta leave at five.
Woman: It's kinda expensive, to be honest.
Woman: That's sorta what I meant.
Woman: We're gonna meet up after class.
Woman: I wanna make sure the file is correct.
Woman: You gotta sign up online first.
Woman: The instructions are kinda confusing.
Woman: I'm sorta worried about the deadline.

Task A: Identify the reduction

Directions

- Listen to Track Ch4-Track2.
- For each sentence, circle the reduction you hear.

Options: **gonna / wanna / gotta / kinda / sorta**

1. I'm _____ email the professor tonight.
2. Do you _____ sit near the window?
3. I _____ leave at five.
4. It's _____ expensive, to be honest.
5. That's _____ what I meant.
6. We're _____ meet up after class.
7. I _____ make sure the file is correct.
8. You _____ sign up online first.
9. The instructions are _____ confusing.
10. I'm _____ worried about the deadline.

Task B: Match reduced form to standard form

Match A–E.
A) gonna B) wanna C) gotta D) kinda E) sorta

1. want to
2. going to
3. got to / have to
4. kind of
5. sort of

Task C: Meaning check (Don't confuse reduced forms)

Choose the best interpretation.

1. "I gotta leave at five." means:
(A) I want to leave (but it's optional)
(B) I must leave (necessary)

2. "It's kinda expensive." means:
(A) It is extremely expensive
(B) It is somewhat expensive

3. "We're gonna meet up after class." means:
(A) Future plan
(B) Completed action in the past

4.4 Elision (Audio Required)

Elision means a sound is dropped. This happens often when English creates difficult consonant clusters, especially with /t/ and /d/.

You may still "feel" the missing sound in rhythm, but you may not hear it clearly.

Common elision patterns

- **Pattern 1: /t/ or /d/ dropped between consonants**
  - next day → "nex day"
  - most people → "mos people"
  - first time → "firs time"
  - old friend → "ol friend" (sometimes)

- **Pattern 2: /t/ or /d/ softened at word boundaries**
  - want to → "wanna" (also a reduction)
  - used to → "usta" (varies by speaker)

- **Pattern 3: Cluster simplification with -ed forms** Past tense **-ed** can create clusters that encourage elision:
    - asked (…sk + t)
    - missed (…s + t)
    - worked (…k + t)

A speaker may not release the final /t/ clearly, making it sound like:

- "ask" instead of "asked"
- "miss" instead of "missed"

This can directly affect TOEFL detail questions about time.

Audio Track Ch4-Track4 (Listen to the sample)
Man: next day … next day
Man: most people … most people
Man: first time … first time
Man: last month … last month
Man: I saw him the next day.
Man: Most people don't notice it.
Man: It was my first time there.
Man: We met last month.
Man: She asked for help, but I missed the message.
Man: He worked late and watched the recording.

Task A: Which standard form? (Multiple-choice mapping)

Directions

- Listen to **Track Ch4-Track4.**
- Choose the standard written form you think matches what you heard.

1. You hear: "nex day"
(A) next day
(B) neck day
(C) next they
(D) next date

2. You hear: "mos people"
(A) most people
(B) must people
(C) moss people
(D) more people

3. You hear: "firs time"
(A) first time
(B) fast time
(C) first team
(D) face time

4. You hear: "las month"
(A) last month
(B) lost month
(C) last Monday
(D) less month

5. You hear: "She ask for help…"
(A) She asked for help
(B) She asks for help
(C) She is asking for help
(D) She will ask for help

6. You hear: "I miss the message."
(A) I missed the message
(B) I miss the message
(C) I'm missing the message
(D) I will miss the message

Task B: Past or present? (Elision + grammar meaning)

Sometimes elision hides **-ed** endings. Use context:

1. "She asked for help, but I missed the message." is mainly about:
(A) A routine habit
(B) A completed past situation

Important TOEFL warning: do not rely on "hearing every -ed"

In natural speech, the past ending might be quiet or partially dropped. That means you must use: time words (yesterday, last week, last month) sequence logic (first, then, after that) meaning plausibility (a message can be missed in the past)

Elision does not remove meaning. It just hides the sound.

4.5 Dialogues Showing Reduced Forms

In this section, you will practice connected speech in short dialogues. Each dialogue includes: one comprehension question (meaning) one form-focused question (what reduced/linked/elided form occurred)

You will see 10 dialogues. One of them is a fast, excited student exchange (also available in audio).

Dialogue 1 (Linking: "pick it up")

Woman: Can you pick it up after class?
Man: Sure. I'll pick it up at four.

1. Q1 (Meaning): When will he pick it up?
(A) At four
(B) After dinner

2. Q2 (Form): Which linked phrase appears?
(A) pick it up
(B) pick a cup

Dialogue 2 (Reduction: gonna)

Man: I'm gonna print the report tonight.
Woman: Good—then we can submit it tomorrow morning.

1. What is the plan for tonight?
(A) Print the report
(B) Submit the report

2. "gonna" most likely means:
(A) going to
(B) got to

Dialogue 3 (Reduction: wanna + linking)

Woman: Do you wanna sit near the front?
Man: I'd rather sit in the back—it's quieter.

1. Where does the man prefer to sit?
(A) Near the front
(B) In the back

2. "wanna" most likely means:
(A) want to
(B) went to

Dialogue 4 (Elision: “next day”)

Man: When did you hear back from them?
Woman: The next day—surprisingly fast.

1. How long did it take to hear back?
(A) One day
(B) One week

2. In fast speech, “next day” may sound like:
(A) nex day
(B) neat day

Dialogue 5 (Elision: “most people”)

Woman: Is the policy complicated?
Man: Not really. Most people understand it.

1. What does the man think?
(A) The policy is easy to understand
(B) The policy is too complex

2. The /t/ in “most” is often:
(A) fully stressed and long
(B) dropped or very light before another consonant

Dialogue 6 (kinda / sorta: soft opinions)

Man: How was the guest lecture?
Woman: It was kinda interesting, but sorta long.

1. What is her opinion?
(A) Extremely positive
(B) Mixed: somewhat interesting, somewhat too long

2. “kinda” and “sorta” usually express:
(A) strong certainty
(B) a mild or approximate opinion

Dialogue 7 (Linking + reduction: “gonna meet up”)

Woman: We’re gonna meet up after the seminar, right?
Man: Yes—outside the main hall.

1. Where will they meet?
(A) Outside the main hall
(B) Inside the library

2. What does “meet up” mean here?
(A) meet (informally)
(B) argue

Dialogue 8 (Elision with past cluster: missed / asked)

Man: Did you email the advisor?
Woman: I asked yesterday, but I missed her reply.

1. Did she contact the advisor already?
(A) Yes
(B) No

2. Which endings may be hard to hear clearly in fast speech?
(A) the final consonants in *asked* and *missed*
(B) the first consonants in *asked* and *missed*

Dialogue 9 (Linking hides word boundaries)

Woman: Did you send it in an email?
Man: Yes—I sent it in an email this morning.

1. When did he send it?
(A) This morning
(B) Yesterday

2. Which phrase is likely heavily linked?
(A) in an email
(B) sent it

Dialogue 10 (Fast student dialogue with heavy reductions — audio)

This dialogue includes multiple reduced forms, linking, and a fast pace.

Audio Track Ch4-Track3 (Listen to the sample)
Man: Hey, are you gonna go to the study group later?
Woman: I wanna, but I've gotta finish this lab first.
Man: Same. It's kinda hard, honestly.
Woman: Yeah, and the instructions are sorta unclear.
Man: If we don't finish, we'll have to stay up all night.
Woman: Then let's meet up after class and compare answers.
Man: Perfect—I'll text you when I'm done.
Woman: Cool. Don't forget to bring it, okay?

1. Q1 (Meaning): Why can't the woman go right now?
(A) She has to finish a lab
(B) She doesn't like study groups

2. Q2 (Form): Which reduced forms do you hear? (Choose two.)
(A) gonna
(B) wanna
(C) gotta
(D) sorta

3. Q3 (Meaning): What will they do after class?
(A) Meet up and compare answers
(B) Go to sleep early

Listening clue: The meaning is carried by stressed words (study group, finish, lab, meet up, after class). The reduced forms are short but frequent.

4.6 Script Analysis Lab (Audio Required)

In this lab, you will see two scripts printed in standard written form. Your job is to predict where connected speech will occur, then confirm by listening.

What you will do

1. Underline places with likely consonant + vowel linking.
2. Circle likely reductions (going to, want to, got to, kind of, sort of).
3. Box likely elision zones (next day, most people, last month, asked, missed, worked).
4. Answer comprehension questions.

Script 1 (Campus email / assignment)

Standard form (print)

Advisor: If you are going to submit the form today, please read it again before you send it. Most people forget one small section, and it creates problems later. If you want to meet up, I can talk with you in an hour.

Predict connected speech:

"are going to" → likely "are gonna"

"read it again" → linking

"send it" → linking

"most people" → possible /t/ elision

"want to" → likely "wanna"

"meet up" → linking in "meet up"

"in an hour" → linking

Script 2 (Mini academic talk: attention + mistakes)

Standard form (print)

Professor: When people listen quickly, they tend to miss small word endings, and the next day they cannot remember details clearly. This is why we practice noticing final sounds and connected speech. If you have got to take one lesson from today, it is to listen for meaning, not for perfect individual words.

Predict connected speech:

"the next day" → likely /t/ elision

"have got to" → likely "gotta" (informal) or "have to"

"to take" → linking

"listen for" → linking

"not for" → linking

Audio Track Ch4-Track5 (Listen to the sample)
Woman: If you're gonna submit the form today, please read it again before you send it. Most people

forget one small section, and it creates problems later. If you wanna meet up, I can talk with you in an hour.
Woman: When people listen quickly, they tend to miss small word endings, and the next day they can't remember details clearly. This is why we practice noticing final sounds and connected speech. If you've gotta take one lesson from today, it's to listen for meaning, not for perfect individual words.

Lab Tasks

Task A: Underline / circle / box (form focus)

For each script: underline linking zones (C+V) circle reductions box elision zones

Then check by listening to **Track Ch4-Track5.**

Task B: Comprehension questions (Script 1)

1. What problem do "most people" have?
(A) They forget a small section of the form
(B) They cannot read the form at all
(C) They never submit forms

2. What does the advisor offer to do?
(A) Submit the form for the student
(B) Talk with the student in an hour
(C) Cancel the deadline

Task C: Comprehension questions (Script 2)

1. What happens when people listen quickly?
(A) They remember more details
(B) They miss small endings and later forget details
(C) They become better speakers immediately

2. What is the professor's main advice?
(A) Listen for perfect individual words
(B) Listen for meaning
(C) Avoid connected speech

What this lab teaches (important takeaway)

The audio version contains reductions ("you're gonna," "wanna," "you've gotta"), linking ("send it," "read it again," "in an hour"), and elision ("most people," "next day"). The printed version does not show these changes. TOEFL listening is mostly like the audio version.

So the skill is: predict the reductions, then confirm them—without losing the meaning.

4.7 Review Quiz

This quiz mixes recognition, matching, and TOEFL-style logic. Do it after completing the chapter's drills.

Part A: Linking recognition (8 items)

Choose the best standard form for the linked speech.

1. "pickitup"
(A) pick it up
(B) pick a cup

2. "inanhour"
(A) in an hour
(B) in our

3. "didyousendit"
(A) did you send it
(B) did you send

4. "takealook"
(A) take a look
(B) take a lock

5. "readitagain"
(A) read it again
(B) read it a game

6. "turnitoff"
(A) turn it off
(B) turn off it

7. "ata desk" (fast)
(A) at a desk
(B) at the desk

8. "needitoday"
(A) need it today
(B) needed today

Part B: Reduction recognition (5 items)

Match the reduced form to the standard form.

A) gonna
B) wanna
C) gotta
D) kinda
E) sorta

1. going to
2. want to
3. have to / got to
4. kind of
5. sort of

Part C: Elision mapping (5 items)

Choose the most likely standard form.

1. “nex day”
(A) next day
(B) next date

2. “mos people”
(A) most people
(B) more people

3. “firs time”
(A) first time
(B) fast time

4. “las month”
(A) last month
(B) last Monday

5. “I miss the message” (context: yesterday)
(A) I missed the message
(B) I miss the message

Which contrasts were tested?

- Linking: word boundaries (C+V)
- Reductions: common phrase shortening
- Elision: /t/ and /d/ loss in clusters + hidden past meaning

4.8 TOEFL Connection Mini Set (Connected Speech Focus)

Each item targets connected speech problems that commonly affect TOEFL answers.

1) Listen and Choose a Response (reduction: gonna)

Man: I'm gonna submit the assignment tonight.

Choose the best response.
(A) You submitted it last night.
(B) Good idea—then it won't be late.
(C) The assignment is kind of a building.
(D) You want a submission.

Correct answer: B
Why: "gonna" means "going to" (future plan). B responds naturally.

2) Conversation Excerpt (linking: "send it")

Woman: Did you send it to the professor?
Man: Yes, I sent it this morning.

Question: What did the man do?
(A) He plans to send it later
(B) He already sent it

Correct answer: B
Connected speech focus: "send it / sent it" often links; listen for the tense meaning, not separated words.

3) Announcement (elision: "next day," "most people")

Announcer: If you miss today's registration window, the next day will be much busier. Most people try to register in the morning, so expect delays.

Question: Why might there be delays?
(A) Because many people register in the morning
(B) Because the office is closed all day

Correct answer: A
Connected speech focus: "next day" and "most people" may lose /t/ in fast speech.

4) Mini Academic Talk (meaning over perfect words)

Professor: In fast speech, listeners may not hear every sound clearly, especially at word boundaries. However, skilled listeners use context and stress patterns to rebuild meaning. This is why training with connected speech improves comprehension.

Question: What is the main idea?
(A) Fast speech is impossible to understand
(B) Context and stress help listeners understand connected speech
(C) Word boundaries are not important

Correct answer: B

Chapter 4 Answer Key

4.2 Task A: Identify boundaries — Answer Check (original)

1. **turn | it | off**
2. **read | it | again**
3. **need | it | today**
4. **take | a | look**
5. **in | an | hour**
6. **at | a | desk**
7. **did | you | send | it**

4.2 Task B: Matching (Linked form → standard form)

Answers: 1–E, 2–H, 3–B, 4–F, 5–A, 6–C, 7–G, 8–D

4.2 Task C: Meaning confirmation

Answers: 1–B, 2–B

4.3 Task A: Identify the reduction

Answers (1–10): 1. gonna 2. wanna 3. gotta 4. kinda 5. sorta 6. gonna 7. wanna 8. gotta 9. kinda 10. sorta

4.3 Task B: Match reduced form to standard form

Answers: A–2, B–1, C–3, D–4, E–5

4.3 Task C: Meaning check

Answers: 1–B, 2–B, 3–A

4.4 Task A: Which standard form? — Answer Key + Clues (original)

1. **A** — common /t/ elision makes “next” sound like “nex.”
2. **A** — “most” often loses the /t/ before another consonant.
3. **A** — “first” often loses the /t/ before a consonant.
4. **A** — “last” often loses the /t/ before a consonant.
5. **A** — past tense “asked” may lose the released /t/; context helps (a completed request).
6. **A** — same issue: “missed” may sound like “miss” in fast speech; context suggests past.

4.4 Task B: Past or present? (Elision + grammar meaning)

Answers: 1–B

4.5 Dialogues 1–10 — Answer Key (original)

1. **Dialogue 1:** Q1 A; Q2 A
2. **Dialogue 2:** Q1 A; Q2 A
3. **Dialogue 3:** Q1 B; Q2 A
4. **Dialogue 4:** Q1 A; Q2 A
5. **Dialogue 5:** Q1 A; Q2 B
6. **Dialogue 6:** Q1 B; Q2 B

7. **Dialogue 7:** Q1 A; Q2 A
8. **Dialogue 8:** Q1 A; Q2 A
9. **Dialogue 9:** Q1 A; Q2 A (both are linked; “in an email” is especially smooth)
10. **Dialogue 10:** Q1 A; Q2 B and C (also A and D appear; if asked for two, choose the clearest pairs); Q3 A

4.6 Script Analysis Lab — Comprehension Answer Keys

Script 1 (Task B): 1–A, 2–B
Script 2 (Task C): 1–B, 2–B

4.7 Review Quiz — Answer Keys

Part A (Linking recognition, 1–8): 1–A, 2–A, 3–A, 4–A, 5–A, 6–A, 7–A, 8–A
Part B (Reduction recognition): A–1, B–2, C–3, D–4, E–5
Part C (Elision mapping, 1–5): 1–A, 2–A, 3–A, 4–A, 5–A

Chapter 14: Drills: Rapid-Fire Response Practice

Fast, accurate responses require two skills at the same time:

1. Understanding what the speaker is doing (requesting, offering, confirming, inviting, apologizing, refusing).

2. Choosing a reply that matches the situation, the tone, and the key detail (time, place, price, next step).

This chapter gives you high-density drills with short, realistic prompts. You will practice staying calm, listening for focus words, and responding naturally—even when options sound similar or repeat the same vocabulary.

14.1 Strategy Recap

Use this short checklist before you answer.

14.1.1 Step 1: Identify the Function (What is happening?)

Ask: **What is the speaker doing?**

- Request: **“Could you…?” / “Would you mind…?” / “Can you…?”**

- Offer: **“Do you want me to…?” / “Would you like…?”**

- Confirmation check: **“So it’s…right?” / “Did you mean…?”**

- Suggestion/Invitation: **“How about…?” / “Why don’t we…?” / “Do you want to…?”**

- Apology/Explanation: **“Sorry…” / “I didn’t mean to…” / “I was late because…”**

If you choose a response that matches the wrong function, it will sound natural but still be wrong.

14.1.2 Step 2: Catch the Focus Words (Time, place, number, action)

Many mistakes happen because the listener misses one small detail.

Common high-risk focus words:

- Times: **1:15 vs. 1:50; 2:15 vs. 2:50**

- Room numbers: **204 vs. 214**

- Cost: **fee vs. free**

- Locations: **Hall A vs. Hall 8**

- Forms and tasks: **form vs. from; turn in vs. pick up**

When you hear a key detail, mentally connect it to one clear idea:

- time → schedule

- room → location

- fee → cost - pick up → collect

14.1.3 Step 3: Match Tone and Relationship

A correct reply should fit the tone:

- Polite neutral (staff/service): **“Sure.” “Of course.” “Let me check.”**

- Friendly casual (classmates/friends): **“Sure.” “No problem.” “Sounds good.”**

- More urgent: **“I’m in a hurry.” → brief, helpful reply**

Tone mismatches are common traps:

- Too casual with staff (“Yep, whatever.”)

- Too formal with friends (“I sincerely appreciate your offer.”)

- Too strong (“You must…”) when the situation is light

14.1.4 Step 4: Quick Elimination (Three fast checks)

If an option sounds okay, check:

1. Does it answer the question? (not just repeat a word)

2. Does it fit the details? (time/place/price)

3. Does it fit the social action? (accept/decline/clarify)

14.2 Rapid Set A: Daily Life (Audio Required)

How to use these drills

- You will hear 5 prompts per track with clear pauses.
- Look at Items 1–5 while you listen to the first track, then choose (A)–(D).
- Do not overthink. Choose the reply that is most natural and helpful.

Audio Track Ch14-Track2 (Listen to the sample)

Items 1–5

1. Prompt: You hear someone ask for directions to an ATM.
(A) Sure—there’s one across the street next to the pharmacy.
(B) I don’t use cash very often.
(C) ATMs are expensive these days.
(D) It closes at five.

2. Prompt: A cashier asks, “Do you want a receipt?”
(A) Yes, please.
(B) Not really—receipts are paper.
(C) The total is on the screen.
(D) I bought it yesterday.

3. Prompt: Someone says, “So the pickup is at 5:15, right?”
(A) Yes, 5:15 works for me.
(B) Actually, it’s 5:50, not 5:15.
(C) The pickup is free today.
(D) It’s at Gate 15.

4. Prompt: Someone suggests, “How about taking the earlier bus to avoid traffic?”
(A) Good idea. Let’s take the 4:10 bus.
(B) Traffic is made of cars.
(C) I took the earlier bus yesterday.
(D) The bus is earlier than traffic.

5. Prompt: Someone says, “Sorry—can I cut in line? I’m in a hurry.”
(A) I’m sorry, but the line starts back there.
(B) Sure, take as much time as you need.
(C) Yes, you’re right to be in a hurry.
(D) Cutting is dangerous.

Audio Track Ch14-Track3 (Listen to the sample)

Items 6–10

6. Prompt: Someone says, “Could you hold the elevator?”
(A) Sure—go ahead.
(B) No, the elevator is heavy.
(C) I held it yesterday.
(D) Elevators are in buildings.

7. Prompt: A cashier says, “Your total comes to fifteen dollars.”
(A) Here you go—fifteen dollars.
(B) Did you say fifty dollars?
(C) That’s a fair price for coffee.
(D) I’m paying on Friday.

8. Prompt: A barista says, “We’re out of regular coffee. Would you like decaf?”
(A) Decaf is fine, thanks.
(B) I’m out of regular time.
(C) Yes, I like cafés.
(D) I don’t like being out.

9. Prompt: Someone offers, “I can drop you off at the station if you’d like.”
(A) Thanks—that would be great.
(B) I dropped off the station already.
(C) Stations are busy today.
(D) I’d like the station to be closer.

10. Prompt: A host says, "Sorry—your reservation is for Thursday, not Tuesday."
(A) Oh, thanks for telling me. Is there any opening on Tuesday?
(B) Yes, Thursday is a day.
(C) I reserved a table because I like Thursdays.
(D) No problem. The restaurant is on Tuesday Street.

Audio Track Ch14-Track4 (Listen to the sample)

Items 11–15

11. Prompt: A staff member says, "Could you fill out this form and sign at the bottom?"
(A) Sure. Where should I return it when I'm done?
(B) I'm from the bottom.
(C) I signed up for a form yesterday.
(D) The bottom is the last part of the page.

12. Prompt: Someone asks, "Is the service free, or is there a fee?"
(A) There's a small fee—ten dollars.
(B) It's free, so there's a fee.
(C) The fee is on the first floor.
(D) Services are helpful.

13. Prompt: Someone says, "Do you want me to call maintenance for you?"
(A) Yes, please. The sink has been leaking since yesterday.
(B) No, sinks are common.
(C) Maintenance calls me.
(D) I called yesterday, so I can't call today.

14. Prompt: Someone asks, "Is this Maple Street or Maple Avenue?"
(A) This is Maple Avenue. Maple Street is one block over.
(B) Maple is a kind of tree.
(C) Streets are longer than avenues.
(D) It's on the map.

15. Prompt: Someone says, "Would you mind turning the music down a little?"
(A) Oh, sorry. I'll turn it down.
(B) No, the music is fine for me.
(C) Music helps me study, so you should leave.
(D) Turning is hard.

⚠ DON'T LET NATIVE SPEED BLOCK YOUR DREAM SCORE!

Complete Your Ear Training with the Ultimate 2026 Listening System.

Congratulations! You have successfully completed the core diagnostics and Connected Speech training in this preview. You have experienced how native speakers modify sounds at speed, and how to spot those changes effortlessly.

However, the real TOEFL® iBT Listening section contains **47 fast-paced items**, including complex academic lectures and academic synthesis questions. To secure a **Band 5.0 - 6.0 (equivalent to 95 - 120 on the old scale)**, you must master note-taking under pressure, transition signals, and logical inference.

Complete your training. Do not leave your score to chance. Choose your preferred platform below to order the full **500+ page edition** or the exclusive **5-Book Ultimate Bundle**:

🌐 **GLOBAL STUDENTS (Outside of Turkey)**

Format / Package	**Platform**	**Link**
Printed Book *(Paperback)*	**Amazon KDP**	🛒 Order on Amazon.com
Digital eBook *(PDF / ePUB)*	**Google Play Books**	📱 Download on Google Books
Digital eBook *(iOS / Mac)*	**Apple Books**	🍎 Download on Apple Books

Exclusive 5-Book Bundle *(Save 30%)*	**Google Play Books**	🎁 Get the 5-Book Bundle Now

*For localized student support in **English, 日本語 (Japanese), or 한국어 (Korean)**, visit our global portal:*

👉 toeflsystem.com

🎧 *Access all audio tracks at:* toeflsystem.com/listening

TR TÜRKİYE'DEKİ ADAYLAR İÇİN (Local Delivery & Turkish Support)

YDS, YÖKDİL veya Hazırlık Muafiyeti için TOEFL iBT'ye hazırlanan adaylar, kitabımıza kargo ücreti ödemeden, yerel ödeme yöntemleriyle ve özel indirimlerle **ydhocam.com** üzerinden hem basılı hem de dijital e-kitap formatında erişebilirler:

- **[📦 BASILI KİTAP OLARAK SİPARİŞ ET (Türkiye İçi Kargo)]**
  (Link: https://ydhocam.com)
- **[📱 GOOGLE PLAY E-KITAP OLARAK ANINDA SATIN AL]**
  (Link: https://ydhocam.com)

JP 日本の受験者の皆様へ (Special Message for Japanese Students)

「ネイティブの英語が早すぎて聞き取れない」という悩みを根本から解消。リダクション、リンキング、そして2026年新形式「Listen and Choose a Response」を完全攻略。
👉 **公式デジタル版＆バンドル購入：toeflsystem.com/home-jp/**

KR 한국인 수험생 여러분께 (Special Message for Korean Students)

들리지 않는 영어는 말할 수도 없습니다! 2026년 개정 토플 청취 영역 완벽 대비, 연음(Linking)과 생략(Elision) 법칙부터 고득점 노토테이킹 비법까지 완벽 수록.
👉 **공식 사이트 방문하기: https://toeflsystem.com/home-kr/**